

A Parent Guide to the MAP Assessment

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) These computerized tests are adaptive and offered in Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics. When taking a MAP test, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. In an optimal test, a student answers approximately half the items correctly and half incorrectly. The final score is an estimate of the student's achievement level.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Do all students in the same grade take the same test?

No. The MAP assessments are designed to target a student's academic performance in mathematics, reading, and language usage. These tests are tailored to an individual's current achievement level. This gives each student a fair opportunity to show what he or she knows and can do. The computer adjusts the difficulty of the questions so that each student takes a unique test.

What are the assessments used for?

The MAP assessments are used to measure your student's progress or growth in school. It shows how much he or she has grown from one year to the next. MAP assessments measure your child's growth in mathematics, reading, and language usage. The scale used to measure student's progress is called the RIT scale. The RIT is an equal-interval scale much like feet and inches on a yardstick. It is used to chart your child's academic growth from year to year.

How do teachers use the test scores?

MAP tests let teachers know where a student's strengths are and if help is needed in any specific areas. Teachers use this information to help them guide instruction in the classroom.

Do I worry if my child's RIT score drops from one test session to another?

No. This is a common phenomenon. While we would like to see all student scores increase, this is no cause for alarm. One score is not enough to indicate a trend. We want to consider student growth over time (i.e., years of time). That does not mean teachers will ignore that score. They will use it as one piece of information for instructional decision making.

Why are there three numbers for the score (e.g., 203-205-208)?

The bold score is the score your child earned on the assessment. The other scores represent a range including a margin of error. It can be expected that if your child took the test again soon, under similar conditions and applying the same effort, the student's score would fall within this range most of the time.

Commonly Used Terms

Here are some terms you will hear and use as you are talking with teachers and your children about MAP scores and reports.

District Average: The average RIT score for all students in the school district in the same grade who were tested at the same time as this student.

Norm Group Average: The average score observed for students in the norm group (i.e., a national group).

Percentile Rank: The percentile rank indicates how well a student performed in comparison to the students in the norm group. The most recent norm sample was a group of over 2.8 million students from across the United States. A student's percentile rank indicates that the student scored as well as, or better than, the percent of students in the norm group. In other words, a student with a percentile rank of 72 scored as well as, or better than 72% of the students in the norm group.

RIT: The MAP assessments use a scale called RIT to measure student achievement and growth. RIT stands for Rasch Unit, which is a measurement scale developed to simplify the interpretation of test scores. The RIT score relates directly to the curriculum scale in each subject area. It is an equal interval scale, like feet and inches. Equal interval means that the difference between scores is the same regardless of whether a student is at the top, bottom, or middle of the RIT scale; it has the same meaning regardless of grade level. The RIT scale is used to measure how "tall" a student is on the curriculum scale and scores can be compared to tell how much growth a student has made, similar to measuring height on a yard-stick. It is important to remember that the RIT score is one of the most important pieces of information on the whole report. This score is independent of the age or grade of the student, and reflects the instructional level at which the student is currently performing. RIT scores make it possible to follow a student's educational growth from year to year.